

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NASA-01 NSC-05 ERDA-05 OES-06 AF-08
ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10 H-01 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
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FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2478

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: US, CA
SUBJECT: OUTER SPACE STSC: HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FEB. 17 SESSION

1. SUMMARY: MAIN DEVELOPMENTS AT FEB. 17 SESSION OF THE
STSC WERE:

(A) AGREEMENT TO ESTABLISH INFORMAL WORKING GROUP ON
REMOTE SENSING, AND

(B) EXTENDED DISCUSSION BETWEEN PROPONENTS OF RESTRICTIONS
ON DISSEMINATION OF DATA/INFORMATION FROM REMOTE SENSING
SATELLITES (USSR, BULGARIA, BRAZIL, AND ARGENTINA), AND
WESTERN ADVOCATES OF OPEN DISSEMINATION POLICY. PARTICIPANTS
IN THE DISCUSSION WERE: ARGENTINA, AUSTRALIA, BRAZIL,
BULGARIA, CANADA, INDIA, ITALY, USSR, UK, US AND UNDRO.
END SUMMARY.

2. WORKING GROUP ON REMOTE SENSING: DELEGATIONS AGREED TO
ESTABLISH INFORMAL WORKING GROUP ON REMOTE SENSING TO BE
CHAired BY CANADA. THE GROUP HELD ITS FIRST SESSION AFTER-
NOON OF FEBRUARY 17 AND WILL MAKE A PRELIMINARY REPORT TO THE
SUB-COMMITTEE FEB. 18 A.M. A MAJOR OBJECTIVE OF THE WORK-
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ING GROUP IS TO SEEK INFORMAL AGREEMENT ON THE DEFINITION
OF THE TERMS "DATA AND INFORMATION" OBTAINED FROM REMOTE
SENSING SATELLITES. AS A FOLLOW-ON TO ITS INITIATIVE LAST
YEAR, SWEDEN HAS SUBMITTED A NEW PAPER ENTITLED "QUESTIONS
RELATING TO REMOTE SENSING OF THE EARTH BY SATELLITES: DE-
FINITION OF THE TERMS "DATA" AND "INFORMATION" IN CONNEC-
TION WITH REMOTE SENSING ACTIVITIES. (A/AC.105/C.1/L.95)."

CANADA HAS SUBMITTED AN AMENDMENT TO THE SWEDISH WORKING PAPER (A/AC.105/C.1/L.95/AMEND.1). THESE DOCUMENTS, WHICH ARE BASICALLY REFINEMENTS OF THE DEFINITIONS OUTLINED IN PARA 8 OF ANNEX III OF THE LEGAL SC REPORT, FORM THE BASIS OF THE WORKING GROUP'S DELIBERATIONS. TEXTS OF THE SWEDISH AND CANADIAN PAPERS ARE BEING POUCHED FOR IO/UNP, NASA/I AND DOD/ISA.

3. DEBATE ON DATA DISSEMINATION. MAJOR PORTION OF SESSION WAS DEVOTED TO EXCHANGE OF VIEWS BETWEEN PROPONENTS OF OPEN POLICY ON DISSEMINATION OF DATA/INFORMATION FROM REMOTE SENSING SATELLITES ON THE ONE HAND AND PROPONENTS OF RESTRICTIVE APPROACH. US, UK, CANADA, ITALY AND AUSTRALIA VOICED STRONG SUPPORT FOR OPEN DISSEMINATION POLICY AS REGARDS CURRENT AND PRESENTLY PLANNED SATELLITE PROGRAMS. ALL WESTERN DELEGATES EMPHASIZED THAT RESTRICTIVE APPROACH ON WHATEVER CRITERIA COULD INVOLVE SERIOUS PROBLEMS FOR INTER-GOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION IN PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF REMOTE SENSING DATA, COULD SET BACK INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS/PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS POLLUTION AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES, AND COULD FURTHER HANDICAP LDC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS. US NOTED, IN VIEW OF FACT THAT US HAS OPENLY DISSEMINATED DATA FOR FIVE YEARS AND IT HAS BEEN REQUESTED BY USERS IN SOME 130 COUNTRIES TO DATE, THAT THE BURDEN OF PROOF OF NEED FOR RESTRICTIVE DISSEMINATION POLICY RESTED WITH STATES ADVOCATING SUCH RESTRICTIONS BUT THAT US IS WILLING TO CONSIDER SUCH ARGUMENTATION. US, UK AND AUSTRALIAN DELS CITED SEVERAL EXAMPLES OF CURRENT AND POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF OPEN DISSEMINATION POLICY.

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LICY, AND ILLUSTRATED PRACTICAL PROBLEMS INHERENT IN RESTRICTIVE APPROACH.

4. SOVIET DEL, SUPPORTED BY BULGARIANS, STUCK ADAMANTLY TO POSITION THAT PRIOR CONSENT SHOULD BE OBTAINED FROM ANY SENSED STATE FOR DISSEMINATION OF ANY DATA OR INFORMATION ACQUIRED AT 50 METER OR LESS RESOLUTION. HE INSISTED THAT USSR WAS NOT PROPOSING PROHIBITION ON DATA DISSEMINATION BUT RATHER SEEKING INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE CONSENT REGIME. IN REPLY TO REQUEST FROM NIGERIAN DELEGATE FOR ASSURANCE THAT THE PROPOSED 50 METER CUTOFF WOULD NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT INTERESTS OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES "FOR ALL TIME TO COME," SOVIETS INSISTED THAT ITS APPROACH WOULD HAVE NO NEGATIVE IMPACT ON LDC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS. (IN SUBSEQUENT STATEMENT US NOTED IT COULD NOT HAVE GIVEN SUCH AN ASSURANCE BECAUSE WE ARE STILL LEARNING WHAT THIS DATA CAN DO, WE ARE STILL EXPERIMENTING WITH IT AND STILL BENEFITING FROM DISCOVERIES BY SCIENTISTS IN OVER 50 COUNTRIES OF WHAT THIS DATA CAN DO.)

MOREOVER, FEDOROV CLAIMED, SOVIETS WOULD BE PREPARED TO SUPPLY LDC'S WITH REMOTE SENSING DATA OBTAINED THROUGH THEIR SATELLITES UNDER MUTUALLY AGREED TERMS.

5. NIGERIA, IN SURPRISING TURNAROUND FROM LAST YEAR, GAVE STRONG SUPPORT TO OPEN DISSEMINATION APPROACH. NIGERIAN DELEGATE (MACAULEY) EXPRESSED WARM APPRECIATION TO US, CANADA AND BRAZIL FOR ASSISTANCE DURING 1976, FOR HOSTING VISIT OF NIGERIAN EXPERTS, AND EXPRESSING WILLINGNESS TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL TRAINING IN USE AND ANALYSIS OF REMOELY SENSED DATA. HE STRONGLY QUESTIONED THE RESTRICTIVE APPROACH PROPOSED BY THE SOVIETS.

6. INDIAN DEL (PAL) ARGUED THAT PROTECTION OF AT LEAST INDIVIDUAL PRIVACY SHOULD BE GIVEN SERIOUS ATTENTION IN CONSIDERING CRITERIA FOR DISSEMINATION OF DATA. INDIA IS NOT SUPPORTING ANY NUMERICAL LIMIT ON RESOLUTION, BUT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ARGUES IN THE ABSTRACT FOR A NEED TO STOP SOMEWHERE, VIZ. WHERE LEGITIMATE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL NEEDS GIVE AWAY TO PRYING. AT THE SAME TIME, HE NOTED REALISTIC APPROACH REQUIRED LDC'S TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT A VARIETY OF FACTORS RELEVANT TO ANY REGIME OF DATA CONTROL, INCLUDING DIFFERING SCIENTIFIC CAPABILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE OF DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, AND THE OVERALL ANALYTICAL AND INDUSTRIAL CAPABILITY IN THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES WHICH ARE CLEARLY BEST EQUIPPED TO EXPLOIT THIS DATA. HE ARGUED THAT LDC'S COULD AND SHOULD SUPPORT A CONSENT DISSEMINATION POLICY PROVIDING DATA WAS USED FOR THEIR BENEFIT IN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS, AND NOT SOLELY FOR PROJECTS OF INTEREST OR BENEFIT TO COUNTRIES POSSESSING ADVANCED REMOTE SENSING TECHNOLOGY.

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7. BRAZIL (LINDEMBERG SETTE), SUPPORTED BY ARGENTINA, ARGUED FORCEFULLY AGAINST OPEN DISSEMINATION APPROACH IN THE "OPERATIONAL STAGE" AND URGED UN ADOPTION OF "DEFINITE JURIDICAL GUARANTEES" FOR SENSED COUNTRIES. THRUST OF BRAZILIAN ARGUMENT WAS THAT MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, WHICH ALREADY HAVE STRONG NEAR-MONOPOLIES AND ADVANTAGES IN CONTROLLING COMMODITY MARKETS, WOULD HAVE FURTHER ADVANTAGES THROUGH UNIMPEDED ACCESS TO NATURAL RESOURCES DATA OBTAINED THROUGH REMOTE SENSING. LDC'S MUST DEMAND PRIOR CONSENT REGIME FOR SUCH DATA USE IN ORDER TO PROTECT THEIR ECONOMIC POSITION AGAINST MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS. WITHOUT MENTIONING US BY NAME, HE REFERRED TO A NUMBER OF ACTUAL EXAMPLES IN COMMODITY AREA (PROBABLY COFFEE AND SUGAR) CLEARLY IMPLYING THEY INVOLVED US OR US CONTROLLED COMPANIES.

8. AUSTRALIA SAID THAT SINCE NO ONE WAS QUESTIONING THE RIGHT TO SENSE IN THE FIRST SPACE, DATA WILL BE COLLECTED. GIVEN THAT FACT, OPEN DISSEMINATION SEEMED THE BEST COURSE AS A MATTER OF UNIVERSAL BALANCE. DATA SHOULD NOT BE LEFT IN THE HANDS OF THE FEW. IN ANY CASE, AUSTRALIA IS VERY DUBIOUS ABOUT ANY SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL OR OTHER MERIT IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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A 50 METER OR A 10 METER RESOLUTION CUT-OFF OF DATA AVAILABILITY.

9. CANADA (STROME) ANNOUNCED THAT ITS SECOND LANDSAT STATION SHOULD ENTER OPERATIONAL STATUS WITHIN A FEW WEEKS. SUPPORTED SWEDISH DRAFT APPROACH ON DEFINITIONS WITH MINOR ADJUSTMENTS.

10. FINAL SPEAKER, UN DISASTER RELIEF ORGANIZATION (UNDRO), SOUGHT SUPPORT FOR RECOMMENDATION ON USE OF SPACE TECHNOLOGY TO HELP DEVELOPING NATIONS DEAL WITH AND LESSON THE IMPACT OF NATURAL DISASTERS. US WILL SUPPORT.
YOUNG

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Message Attributes

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